

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Office of Fire and Aviation
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

January 4, 2002

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To: State Directors

From: Director, Office of Fire and Aviation

Subject: Extended Emergency Temporary Duty Travel

When emergency travel assignments such as wildland fires, floods, hurricanes and other emergencies involve extended periods at temporary duty locations exceeding 30 days, the per diem rate will be reduced to 55 percent of the maximum allowable per diem rate for the locality, unless a different rate is fully justified. The justification for a different rate must be approved by the State Director and attached to the travel voucher.

In consultations with the National Business Center, it has been determined that the State Director may re-delegate the approval authority for a different rate to the Field Office Manager. It has also been determined that the Field Office Manager may re-delegate the approval authority to the traveler's supervisor.

The rationale driving the guidance, Federal Travel Regulations (301-7.12 a through d), is to motivate employees detailed on extended assignments to secure food and lodging at lower costs (e.g., weekly or monthly rentals) in order to reduce maximum per diem rates when appropriate.

The regulations do not provide the flexibility to waive the approval requirement when an emergency employee is dispatched to an incident, even though the employee is unaware of the duration of the assignment at the time of dispatch. However, in order to simplify and comply with the required approval process, it is suggested that the following template be completed and attached to the employee's travel voucher to authorize a different rate:

_____’s emergency incident travel has been extended beyond 30 days and faces a per diem reduction of 55% of the authorized rate. The duration of this duty was not known at the beginning of the travel and so arrangements for living quarters at a reduced cost could not be made. The reduction to 55% will cause an extreme hardship on the employee and so I authorize per diem not to exceed 99% of the authorized rate for travel performed beginning _____ and ending _____.

Signed: _____
Supervisor

Date: _____

If you have further questions, please contact Ed Lewis, Office of Fire and Aviation, at 208-387-5166.

Signed by:
Lynn P. Findley
Acting Director
Office of Fire and Aviation

Authenticated by:
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